

# Regional AGENDA

## METROPOLITAN KING COUNTY COUNCIL

July-August 2001

### Medic One Funding To Come Before Voters

This November, King County residents will vote on a six-year property tax levy dedicated to funding the award-winning Medic One program. The measure was placed on the ballot after the County Council accepted the recommendation of the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) 2002 Task Force. If approved by voters, the levy rate would be \$0.25 or less per \$1000 of assessed valuation.

"Medic One is a vital, life-saving resource in our communities," said Councilmember Greg Nickels, co-sponsor of the ordinance. "The

plan would provide for the continuation and expansion of a regional service that has proved itself a worthy investment."

The EMS task force was created in the wake of the 1997 defeat of a similar Medic One levy measure. The panel explored ways to continue funding the Emergency



*Funding for Medic One service will go before voters in November.*

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*Councilmember David Irons is chair of the Utilities and Technology Committee.*

### Council Protects Ratepayers From Power Rates Approves 2002 Sewer Rates Package

The Metropolitan King County Council approved a series of ordinances this summer that will protect sewer service ratepayers from the impact of electricity price swings, while still providing the funds needed by the wastewater treatment division to maintain facilities.

"Our action protects ratepayers from paying rates at the mercy of the wildly fluctuating electricity market," said Councilmember

David Irons, chair of the council's Utility and Technology Committee. "Our action ensures there will be contingency funds available to respond to unanticipated challenges, such as construction problems and regulatory changes, that would impact the wastewater treatment system."

"Proactively adopting these financial policies protects the County's bond rating, allowing the

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District 1	Maggi Fimia	296-1001	District 6	Rob McKenna	296-1006	District 11	Jane Hague	296-1011
District 2	Cynthia Sullivan	296-1002	District 7	Pete von Reichbauer	296-1007	District 12	David Irons	296-1012
District 3	Louise Miller	296-1003	District 8	Greg Nickels	296-1008	District 13	Les Thomas	296-1013
District 4	Larry Phillips	296-1004	District 9	Kent Pullen	296-1009	General Phone		296-1000
District 5	Dwight Pelz	296-1005	District 10	Larry Gossett	296-1010	TTY / TDD		296-1024

## Councilmember Gossett Appears On NIGHTLINE



*Councilmember Larry Gossett represents District Ten, which includes Seattle's inner-city communities.*

Councilmember Larry Gossett made an appearance on the ABC News program Nightline July 23rd to discuss the issue of “de-policing,” the unwritten policy of police not to enter communities of color for other than emergency calls to avoid accusations of racism.

In the wake of shootings of African American men by police in both Seattle and Cincinnati, there have been charges that officers are avoiding potential confrontations by avoiding minority neighborhoods. Gossett was part of a panel that included the Reverend Damon Lynch III, President of Cincinnati's Black United Front and Keith Fangman, President of the Cincinnati Fraternal Order of Police. During the program,

Gossett stressed the policy of de-policing only perpetuates the animosity that has grown between police and people of color.

“There are hard feelings and distrust on both sides,” Gossett said after the program. “If there are going to be any solutions, it starts with interaction. Police have a job to do and shouldn't be unwilling or afraid of going into neighborhoods of color. Those living in the neighborhoods deserve the law enforcement their tax dollars pay for, while not enduring what they see as unfair harassment in their encounters with officers. The bottom line is both the police and community residents must work with each other from a position of respect and understanding.”

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## Council Protects Ratepayers From Power Rates Approves 2002 Sewer Rates Package

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county to borrow at more competitive rates,” said Councilmember Cynthia Sullivan. “When we fund capital improvement projects at lower interest rates, we're protecting ratepayers from significant and annual service rate increases.”

The package approved by the Council sets sewage rates for 2002 at \$23.40 a month. The body also adopted a capacity charge, taking effect in 2002, of \$17.20 for new connections to the regional system. The increases are due in a large part to rising energy costs and the continuing drought.

Earlier this year, the sewage treatment plant at Renton saw energy prices skyrocket, pulling an unexpected \$17 million from their operating budget. Instead of passing that expense on to ratepayers all at once, the council adopted a new accounting policy to spread the impact over several months. The accounting practice called FAS-71, will allow the County to spread out 2001 electricity costs into the 2002 budget.

“We have been able to keep sewer rates stable since King County's merger with Metro in 1993,” said Councilmember Louise Miller, Chair of the Council's Regional Water Quality Committee. “But with the unexpected increase in energy cost, there was no way around adjusting rates. The hope is with this package, consumers will see more cost certainty and stability, regardless of energy rates.”

The package also sets the 2002 budget process for the Wastewater Treatment Division's Capital Improvement Program and authorizes a \$20 million supplemental appropriation to the 2001 Capital Improvement Program.

“It allows us to start preparing for next year as we maintain the County's ability to meet unanticipated capital expenditures,” said Larry Phillips, Vice Chair of the Council's Budget and Fiscal Management Committee. “We have seen the impact of the price spike on energy cost, so it pays to think ahead.”

## Proclaiming Farmers Markets' Week

The Metropolitan King County Council paid public recognition to the value and importance of local farmers' markets this July, declaring the week of August 11<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup>, 2001 as Farmers' Market Week in King County.

"Farmers' markets are a popular, vital interest to communities," said Councilmember Louise Miller. "King County farmers benefit by selling their goods locally, and communities benefit by enjoying fresh, quality produce. We're happy to once again recognize the outstanding contributions that farmers bring to our region."

Representatives from the Neighborhood Farmers' Market Alliance, Puget Sound Fresh, the King County Agriculture Commission and local farmers participated in the celebration of locally grown produce.

At the conclusion of the July 30<sup>th</sup> council meeting, the farmers' market representatives

presented a virtual cornucopia of locally grown organic vegetables to councilmembers and members of the public.

The number of local King County farmers' markets is growing each year. Currently, there are over a dozen farmers' markets in King County. For more information on the location of markets or the Puget Sound Fresh Program, contact the King County "Farmbudsman" Steve Evans at 206 296-7824 or via e-mail at [steve.evans@metrokc.gov](mailto:steve.evans@metrokc.gov).



## Redistricting To Reshape Council Boundaries

A bipartisan committee is redrawing King County's thirteen council district boundaries. Armed with year 2000 U.S. Census data, the five-member committee is working to balance the population counts in each of the districts.

Earlier this year the Metropolitan King County Council appointed four committee members, two Republicans and two Democrats. In turn, those four appointed a fifth member to serve as chair. The committee chair is Jeffrey L. Fisher. The committee members are Wayne Ehlers, Michael Mann, Connie Marshall, and Mike Patrick.

The committee is in charge of redrawing King County Council district boundary lines. The King County Charter requires that redistricting occur every ten years to reflect changes in population throughout the County. A

districting plan must be submitted by December 31<sup>st</sup> for committee approval. The committee has committed to holding at least four public hearings in September to solicit public testimony from the different regions of King County. For the dates and locations of those meetings, visit the committee's Web site (see address below).

Once approved by the committee, the new district lines take effect in 2002.

More information is available on the Districting Committee's web site. The site contains information about the committee, its goals, and eventually, proposed council district boundary changes. Online testimony can be given electronically and will become part of the public record. The site is located at <http://www.metrokc.gov/redistricting>.

## Council Continues to Study Rural Church/School Issue

No other matter has drawn more input to the council this year than the issue of siting churches and schools in King County's rural areas. The council received thousands of comments through e-mail and public testimony. Varied interests brought unique views to the complex issue, productively adding perspective to the issue. Though the executive vetoed a rural area restrictions measure adopted by the council, all sides have agreed to continue studying the issue in the coming months.

At issue is whether the County should impose restrictions on non-residential structures such as churches, and schools, in the rural area. The impetus for regulation comes from the desire to comply with growth management regulations, and King County's long-term vision for sustainable growth.

Significant time was set aside for council debate and public testimony. During the months of council consideration, parties on all sides engaged in drafting what they hoped might be the compromise proposal. The final product, approved by a council vote of seven to six, contained certain environmental considerations, but was vetoed by the executive on the grounds that it did not go far enough. Just before passing the environmental package, the council repealed the moratorium on building churches and schools in the rural area. The executive signed that measure,

agreeing with the council majority that a cooling off period was necessary.

Council Chair Pete von Reichbauer says the moratorium served its intended purpose, providing a valuable period for collaborative discussions, significant public input and thoughtful council consideration of size limits and environmental regulations.

"The removal of this moratorium allows churches and schools to renovate inadequate and outdated facilities, and locate within the communities they wish to serve," said von Reichbauer.

Of the majority council's proposal vetoed by the executive, von Reichbauer says the measure would have provided landmark legislation creating the foundation for managing growth and protecting the character of rural areas.

"I agree there is more work to be done. That is why I, as the chair of the council, will name a Select Task Force made of councilmembers and citizens to engage with the executive in collaborative discussions over the issues in dispute. I look forward to this Select Task Force advancing discussions with the executive and all interested parties in finding the appropriate balance between growth and preservation," said von Reichbauer.



# Councilmember Phillips: Public Official of the Year

For the past 42 years, the Municipal League of King County has honored a select number of community and government leaders with their annual civic awards. These awards honor individuals and organizations distinguished in their ability to focus on the public interest and to inspire others to work for the general benefit of our region.

This year's Public Official of the Year award was presented to Councilmember Larry Phillips, of Council District Four. "This award is a tremendous honor," said Councilmember Phillips. "I began my career 24 years ago working for an outstanding elected official, Senator Henry Jackson, and am proud to be named King County's Public Official of the Year."

"Larry is a tireless worker for the environment and for good government," said King County Executive Ron Sims. "His dedication serves as an inspiration and direction to those interested in public service. Whether

it's protecting natural resources or guiding the King County Council through growth management issues, Larry Phillips is truly deserving of this recognition."

For the past decade, Councilmember Phillips has been a leader in protecting and enhancing the quality of life in King County through his work to effectively manage and protect natural resources. He is credited with leading bipartisan and often unanimous efforts to permanently secure thousands of acres of open space, habitat and resource lands across King County for future enjoyment by area citizens. He has also been at the forefront of ensuring continued high standards for water quality, carrying on the tradition of METRO in providing stewardship for our lakes, streams and Puget Sound.

The Municipal League of King County is a voluntary civic organization that began in 1910, and is dedicated to effective and responsive government.

*photo from Muni  
League*

## Council Honors Outstanding Authors

They are responsible for books that have received both local and national recognition. Their words explore alternate realities, take us on voyages of discovery, and provide insight to the best and worst of our history. The County Council acknowledged the work of noted authors who call the Pacific Northwest home.

Those honored by the council represent a sample of the wide range of writing genres and literary talent in the region:

- **Greg Bear:** Nebula and Hugo Award winning science fiction author.
- **Henry Friedman:** Holocaust survivor and author of "I'm No Hero: Journeys of a Holocaust Survivor."

- **Nicola Griffith:** author of award winning mystery and science fiction novels.

- **Dr. Charles Johnson:** National Book Award winner, American novelist, short story writer, essayist, and cartoonist.

- **Jack Prelutsky:** author of more than thirty collections of original verse and



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## Council Visits Two Popular Eastside Locales

Continuing the successful monthly visits to locations throughout King County, the Council's committee-of-the-Whole recently met in Bellevue at the new Bellevue Art Museum and in Enumclaw at the King County Fairgrounds.

The successful public meetings are a draw to concerned citizens who take the opportunity to meet locally with their representatives and to speak directly with them. The meeting agendas reflect the issues important to the area and also allow for public testimony. Many people attend who are unable or unlikely to visit a regular Council meeting in downtown Seattle.

### Bellevue Art Museum Provides Backdrop For Artful Discussion

Council Chair Pete von Reichbauer utilized the meeting to discuss the evolving growth of the arts on the Eastside. "King County is a national leader in promoting the arts, with hotel-motel tax revenues dedicated to arts and heritage programs," said von Reichbauer. Meeting topics centered on arts legislation, the King County Arts Commission, and the Eastside Arts and Heritage Facilities/Program.

The Bellevue Art Museum's new location and facility are representative of the support that Eastside residents have for the arts. "Downtown Bellevue has led the Eastside's breathtaking development into a high-tech and high-finance center," said County Councilmember Rob McKenna. "The new Bellevue Art Museum is a fitting addition — a 21st century museum serving a region that will continue to be on the cutting edge of technology, finance

and, now, the arts." A strong supporter of the arts, McKenna is proud to have the Museum in his council district.

### Enumclaw Meeting In Historic Field House Tackles Present-Day Concerns

The Council's annual visit of the King County Fairgrounds in Enumclaw was an opportunity for Councilmembers to tour the Fairgrounds and meet with citizens in southeast King County.

"I was pleased that the Council could hold a meeting in Enumclaw. That gave citizens an opportunity to address their concerns to the Council. Farming and agriculture are important to our County. These local meetings let local citizens talk about the issues that are critical to them," said Councilmember Kent Pullen, who represents southeastern King County, including Enumclaw.

The meeting, attended by local citizens, elected officials, advisory groups and Fairground personnel, among others, was a chance for Councilmembers to meet and discuss topics important to southeast King County. Agricultural preservation and other issues important to farmers and farmland were discussed at the morning meeting.

A highlight of the annual trip to Enumclaw was a presentation by 4-H members and advisors. Children involved in 4-H, many of whom were participating in the King County Fair, made presentations to the Council and included chicken, sheep, and goats.

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## Medic One Funding To Come Before Voters

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Medical Service program, studying twelve different funding options. Their determination was the continuation of the levy for six-years was the best way to secure stable funding.

"Keeping our vital, life-saving Medic One service as strong as possible is the goal of the

levy," said co-sponsor Larry Phillips, vice-chair of the Budget Committee. "This levy will allow for the expansion of the Medic One system, while lowering the levy rate. That's a benefit for taxpayers, and ensures the service will be available to as many citizens as possible."

## Council Approves Artist-Earthquake Aid

Jolted out of their studios and storefronts by the Nisqually Quake, Pioneer Square artists will soon see some financial relief and long-term planning aid thanks in part to action by the Metropolitan King County Council. Councilmembers approved \$25 thousand in emergency relief to be distributed by Artist Trust.

After the February 28<sup>th</sup> earthquake, Artist Trust assessed the impact on the arts community and determined that individual artists in the region incurred losses of workspace, artwork, equipment, materials, and work time totaling nearly \$1.3 million.

“King County is not providing a one-time fix,” said the grant’s chief sponsor Councilmember Larry Phillips. “The money will be used to develop long-term assistance programs focusing on earthquake preparedness and prevention.”

“Local and federal agencies are providing

direct assistance to care for current storage, relocation costs, equipment and materials repair and replacement. Through my legislation, King County will help artists take the next step and engage in earthquake prevention practices,” said Phillips.

Among the long-term assistance programs planned by Artist Trust: public workshops on earthquake preparedness, technical assistance and prevention tips, and an insurance resource guide for artwork, workspace, and equipment.

“Artists often use heavy and hazardous materials in the creation of their art – items that could cause added and serious injury in the event of an earthquake,” said Councilmember Louise Miller. “We’re providing the means for public education, which will give artists the necessary training to earthquake-proof their studios and storefronts.”

## The Vietnam Wall Experience Visits King County

The traveling Vietnam Veterans Memorial touring North America made a weekend stop at Sunset Hills Memorial Park in Bellevue during the last weekend in July. The touring memorial is a 240-foot, ¾-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC. The replica tours year-round for the veterans and families who can’t afford to visit the original in the nation’s capital.

“Just as the memorial in Washington, DC serves as a permanent memorial to those who fought and died in Vietnam, the portable memorial is designed to bring the experience of “The Wall” to the nation,” said Councilmember Jane Hague.

Many who visit the traveling wall have called

it a powerful emotional experience which teaches citizens the cost of freedom and inspires respect for those who defend it.

“A visit to the memorial contributes to one’s understanding of the supreme sacrifice that so many Americans made in defending democracy,” said Councilmember Rob McKenna.

The memorial was open 24 hours during the weekend visit and over 100,000 people visited the tribute to Vietnam veterans.



*Cut-line goes here. Cut-line goes here. Cut-line goes here. Cut-line goes here.*

*"...this memorial is for those who have died, and for us to remember them." - Maya Ying Lin, designer, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.*

# Council Honors Outstanding Authors

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anthologies of children's poetry.

- **David Takami:** author of "Divided Destiny: A history of Japanese Americans in Seattle," which chronicles of the lives of Seattle's Japanese population before and after World War II.
- **Janet Wong:** who gave up law books to become a best selling author of children's poems.



"Their stories and poems provoke thought and enrich our lives," said Council Chair Pete von Reichbauer. "I encourage citizens to read not only their works, but the works of others whose words open doors to new horizons."

The author recognition was part of a celebration that also involved the King County Library System (KCLS). Along with their annual youth summer reading program, the

KCLS is taking part in StoryFest, a celebration recognizing the international language of storytelling. Both events focus on making reading a lifelong activity.

"Everything starts with reading," said von Reichbauer. "It's a gift we need to nurture in everyone everyday."

*The information in this newsletter is available in alternate format upon request. Alternate format includes large print, and/or audio. For more information, please call 296-0360, or TDD/TTY at 296-1024.*

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